

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
‘Socialism on Trial’ presents program
to advance fight for workers power
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 78/NO. 31 SEPTEMBER 1, 2014

‘Militant’ well received, from Ukraine rallies to Ferguson

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The *Militant* was well received this past week at actions across the country protesting cop brutality and killings, supporting Ukrainian sovereignty and against Israel’s war on Gaza.

It was a good prelude to the seven-week international subscription and book-selling campaign, which kicks off Sept. 6. We invite all our readers to join the effort to expand the reach of the paper. Eleven books on revolu-

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Join campaign to expand ‘Militant’ readership

— Sept. 6 to Oct. 28 —

Readers of the *Militant* will be using this issue for two weeks as we take another summer break. The next issue, mailed out Sept. 4, will launch our seven-week fall subscription drive. Supporters of the paper will join in workers’ resistance to attacks by the bosses, their government and their cops, and take the paper to workers’ doorsteps and porches. Join us!

Kurds retake towns from ‘Islamic State’ in Iraq, Syria

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Kurdish fighters are pushing back Islamic State combatants in Iraq and retaking ground from the reactionary group in northeastern Syria.

On Aug. 18, after two days of fighting, Kurdish Peshmerga combatants and Iraqi special forces recaptured the Mosul Dam in northern Iraq, located just outside the autonomous Kurdish region. Accompanying the Kurds’ ground operations were U.S. airstrikes targeting Islamic State armed vehicles and equipment. The Pentagon conducted 68 strikes in Iraq over 10 days starting Aug. 8.

Kurdish ammunition supplies have been tight and needed arms and other materiel from the United States and Europe have been scant.

Washington and its imperialist allies very much want to see the defeat of the Islamic State, which controls one-third of both Iraq and Syria. But they also fear — and have always sought to undermine — the Kurdish people’s fight for a homeland.

The Kurds are an oppressed nationality of some 30 million people living in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Op-

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Thousands join fight against cop killing in Ferguson, Mo.

Protesters across US: ‘Hands up, don’t shoot!’



Militant/Laura Anderson

Hundreds march Aug. 16 through Ferguson, Missouri, to protest killing of Michael Brown, who was shot Aug. 9 by officer Darren Wilson. According to witnesses, Brown had his hands in air.

BY DAN FEIN

FERGUSON, Mo. — Some 500 people demonstrated here Aug. 16 to protest the killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson. Autopsy results released the following day show that Brown, who was unarmed, was shot at least six times, including twice in the head. Eyewitnesses say Brown was facing

the cop with his hands in the air.

“It broke the camel’s back,” Garland Moore, who has lived in Ferguson in St. Louis County north of the city for 33 years and works at an area hospital, told the *New York Times*.

Protests demanding the arrest of Brown’s killer have taken place here daily and the fight has received promi-

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Ukraine: Separatists retreat from strongholds in the east



Militant/Sara Lobman

Supporters of Ukrainian sovereignty protested across U.S. Aug. 16. Above, New York City.

BY JOHN STUDER

As separatist paramilitaries continue their retreat in eastern Ukraine, thousands took to the streets Aug. 16 in cities across the U.S. and elsewhere to support the fight of Ukrainian people to defend their national sovereignty.

Hundreds marched in New York and Chicago in response to the call for actions by well-known Ukrainian

singer Ruslana Lyzhychko, who took to the stage in Kiev’s Independence Square in February as demonstrators battled the hated Berkut riot police, leading up to the overthrow of pro-Moscow President Viktor Yanukovich.

In response, Russian troops invaded and seized Crimea and sent arms and combatants to join pro-Moscow

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Join protests to demand arrest of cops who killed Brown, Garner!

Statement by John Studer, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New York:

I urge working people and youth to march Aug. 23 in Staten Island, New York, an action backed by the National Action Network, the NAACP, Service Employees International Union Local 1199 and the United Federation of Teachers. Take a stand with the parents of Michael Brown, shot down by cops in Ferguson, Missouri, Aug. 9; the parents of Eric Garner, killed in a chokehold July 17 by cops in Staten Island; and thousands of others who

will be there to press for the arrest of killer cops.

“I want everybody possible who can — wheelchairs, crutches, whatever — to come out to this march, for

SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

justice for my husband,” Esaw Garner, Eric Garner’s wife, has said.

If you can, go to Ferguson, Missouri, to stand with those demanding action to stop cop killings, brutality

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South African Metalworkers win wage hike

BY SETH GALINSKY

Some 220,000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa won wage increases after a four-week strike that shut down 12,000 factories, including parts

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Ukraine separatists retreat

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separatists to seize government buildings and announce the formation of the so-called People’s Republics in the eastern Ukrainian provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk.

In the last week three top Russian commanders in Ukraine have resigned and left the country, including Igor Strelkov, the self-proclaimed head of the Donetsk People’s Republic.

“Interviews across eastern Ukraine portray a rapid breakdown in discipline in the rebel ranks,” the *New York Times* reported Aug. 17.

Workers who remain in Donetsk report that paramilitary forces have started drinking openly and abandoned their uniforms in favor of civilian clothes, so they can toss away their weapons and try to blend in with local people as their situation worsens.

In response, Donetsk People’s Republic authorities announced Aug. 18 they were setting up military tribunals and enacting the death penalty for a series of offenses, including treason, desertion, espionage, sabotage and attempts on the lives of senior officials.

Ukrainian troops entered Luhansk Aug. 17 and are advancing toward Donetsk, the last major cities where separatists occupy government buildings.

“I don’t understand the local population’s mentality,” a Russian paramilitary who calls himself Koba, a nickname of Joseph Stalin, told the *Financial Times*, saying it was different in 2007 when he fought in South Ossetia and the Russian military was able to get backing from the local population. The separatists have had a hard time recruiting and retaining recruits in Ukraine.

At the same time, Alexander

Zakharchenko, who announced he was the new prime minister of the Donetsk People’s Republic after the previous Russian commando holding that title quit last week, said Aug. 16 that they were receiving 150 armored vehicles, 30 tanks and 1,200 trained paramilitaries from Russia.

The day before reporters said they saw armored vehicles crossing the Russian border with Ukraine. A little later, Ukrainian authorities announced they had destroyed part of the convoy.

While many in eastern Ukraine are wary of the government in Kiev and initially didn’t oppose the pro-Moscow forces, they welcome the end of the separatists’ provocations. “What was the point of all this bloodshed we’ve had the last three months?” a man named Igor told BBC News in Slovyansk. “Was it worth it just so some people could hang up their separatist flags?”

Both Kiev and Moscow announced they were organizing convoys of humanitarian aid for residents of Luhansk, where water, electricity and telephone service has been out for over two weeks.

Seventy-one trucks filled with 800 tons of food and other necessities were shipped from Kharkiv, Kiev and Dnepropetrovsk to the east Aug. 15.

Moscow announced it had organized some 260 trucks full of relief supplies. The Russian military trucks, painted white and driven by young men in identical beige shorts and shirts, are now parked at the Ukrainian border, awaiting inspection by Ukrainian border agents and the International Red Cross.

In efforts to dispel suspicions that more military equipment or troops might be hidden on the trucks, the Russian drivers have allowed journalists to

Working people in Gaza need end to cycle of wars



Activestills/Basel Yazouri

Israeli officials walked out of cease-fire talks in Cairo after three rockets were fired at Israel from Gaza Aug. 19, ending an uneasy truce. Several hours later Tel Aviv bombed a house they believed Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif was in, killing his wife and infant son.

From Aug 19-20 Hamas fired more than 150 rockets at Israel and Tel Aviv launched more than 100 strikes against Gaza, killing 19 Palestinians and wounding more than 100. Since July 7 more than 2,000 Palestinians have been killed and 10,000 wounded.

Neither Tel Aviv, Hamas or Fatah have made proposals that could bring an end to the destructive cycle of bloodshed and the heavy toll it has inflicted on Palestinian workers, farmers, fishermen and others.

Class-conscious workers in Palestine, Israel and around the world should support a road for a lasting truce with agreements that include recognition of Israel, as both a Jewish homeland and constitutional state, and the recognition of a Palestinian state, which would be a step toward a single, viable geographic homeland for Palestinians. This would open up space for working people to discuss, organize and fight for their interests in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel, as well as lay the basis for a renewal of the Palestinian struggle.

— JOHN STUDER

make random inspections. A number of the trucks have turned out to be mostly empty, possibly intended to carry fighters and weapons out of the country.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, whose capitalist economy is strongly intertwined with Russian gas and oil exports, said she was coming to Kiev to express her support for the Ukrainian government.

Washington, EU press sanctions

In face of a stagnating economy and sanctions by Washington and the EU, Russian capitalists have been restraining the government of Vladimir Putin from deeper intervention in Ukraine.

Most workers, who have lived through Russian wars in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Georgia, also oppose a spreading

war in Ukraine.

Former Finance Minister and close Putin ally Alexei Kudrin voiced rare public criticism of Moscow’s provocations in Ukraine in an interview with the state-run ITAR-TASS news service, saying the government’s course would result in economic crisis.

A new round of U.S. and EU sanctions imposed against Moscow at the end of July have deepened Russia’s economic stagnation. Increases in real wages have sharply declined, leading to a fall in consumer spending. Investment in production has contracted in six of the first seven months of 2014. Inflation is up to 7.5 percent.

In the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk region, cheese is up 10 percent, meat 15 percent and chicken legs up 60 percent.

THE MILITANT

Support workers’ resistance worldwide!

As bosses and their government seek to drive down wages, benefits and working conditions, workers are looking to resist. The ‘Militant’ covers these struggles from Steelworkers locked out by Honeywell in Illinois to garment workers in Bangladesh fighting for better conditions.



Courtesy United Steelworkers Local 7-669
Honeywell uranium plant workers in Illinois reject union-busting contract July 31.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.

‘Militant’ well received

Continued from front page

tionary, working-class politics are on special for those who sign up (see ad below). Supporters of the *Militant* will also be selling two recently published books: *50 Years of Covert Operations in the US* and a new expanded edition of *Socialism on Trial*.

Supporters from Chicago and Omaha, Nebraska, traveled to Ferguson, Missouri, Aug. 16-17 to join protests against the cop killing of Michael Brown.

“We participated in the actions with signs demanding ‘Arrest the cop who killed Michael Brown,’ the front-page headline of the paper,” reported Dan Fein Aug. 18. “This drew a lot of attention and agreement. We signed up 22 new subscribers and sold 110 papers and 17 books.”

“Oh, you are the socialist who split

from all the other socialists because you support Ukraine,” a young woman said to Craig Honts as he introduced the paper to her at an Aug. 16 protest march of 400 people to the Russian consulate in New York. “You’re like George Orwell. He wrote *Animal Farm* to show that the revolution was for something very different than the people who took over afterward turned it into.”

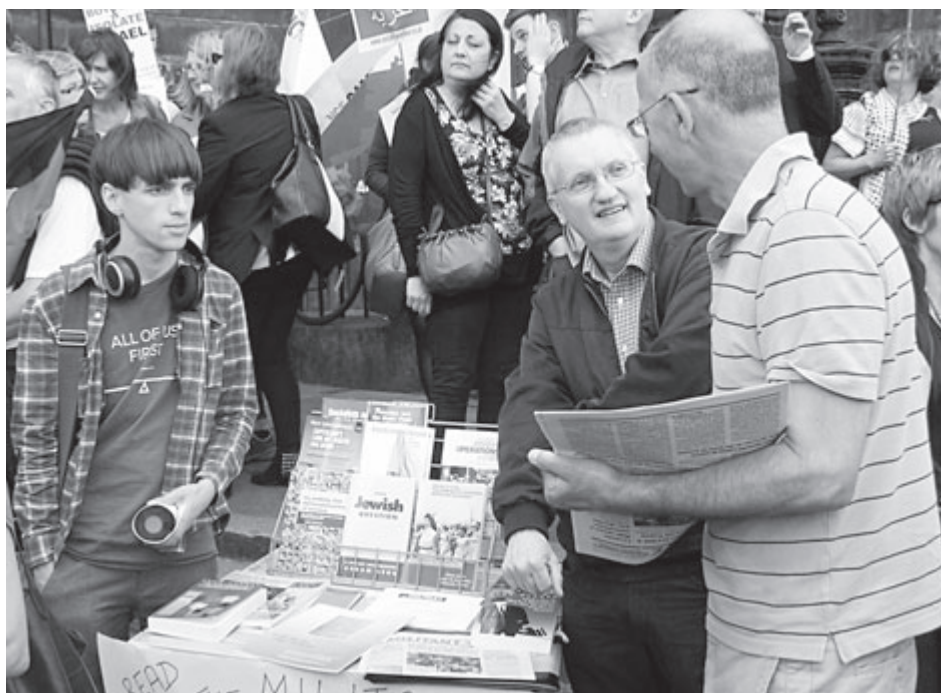
She was one of four participants who decided to subscribe. More than 50 bought single copies.

“We found many workers concerned about declining living conditions and open to a course for workers to advance,” reported Pete Clifford who was part of a team from London and Manchester, England, to Scotland Aug. 9-11. Workers there are considering how to vote in the referendum on Scottish in-

dependence Sept. 18. The team sold nine subscriptions and eight books.

“We need to inform people about the truth of what is happening in Gaza,” Shariq Mohammed told Edwin Fruit when he signed up for a subscription to the *Militant* at a Free Gaza demonstration Aug. 16 at the Westlake Plaza in Seattle.

Mohammed also got *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Pow-*



Militant/ Ögmundur Jónsson

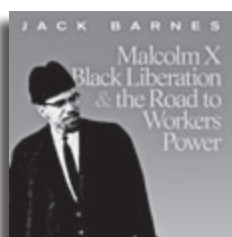
Sean Tulloch, left, bought subscription Aug. 8 when team of *Militant* supporters from London and Manchester, England, joined protest in Edinburgh, Scotland, against Israeli war on Gaza.



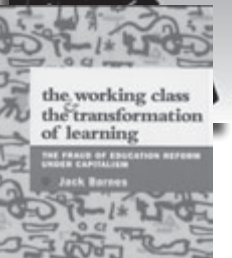
Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Dennis Richter sells subscription to Andrew Kayles, right, one of 22 people who signed up for paper in Ferguson, Missouri, Aug. 16-17.

Special offers with ‘Militant’ subscription



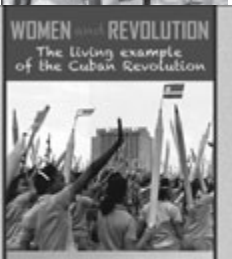
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by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters
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See distributors
on page 8



The Cuban Five
Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free
from pages of the ‘Militant’
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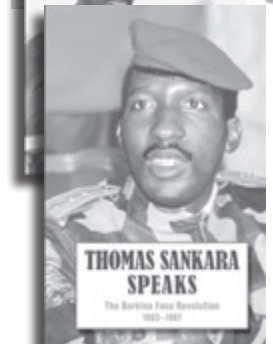
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in the state, GlobalFoundries computer chip manufacturing plant in Malta.”

After seeing the ads in the paper, Ward decided to get two copies each of the specials *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* for himself and his friend. He also got a couple of Malcolm X titles.

“I’m glad someone else has come to Calgary to join the struggle against inequality,” said Stasha Huntingford, a student at University of Calgary, when she met François Bradette and Katy LeRougetel for coffee Aug. 1. She was referring to the prevailing prejudice that people in Alberta are conservative.

Huntingford got a copy of the paper at a July 25 rally protesting the bombing of Gaza, read it and decided she wanted to subscribe. Along with her one-year subscription she picked up two books on special, *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* and *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*.

“This rally is to say no to attacks by ISIS [Islamic State combatants in Syria and Iraq] and no to countries supporting ISIS,” Ari Saleh, one of the organizers of an action Aug. 17 in Calgary, told Bradette and Joe Young. “Kurdistan is for every religion and everyone is welcome: Muslims, Jews, Christians.” One of some 100 participants signed up for a six-month *Militant* subscription.

Sign up friends, co-workers and relatives. Bring the paper to picket lines, social protests and political events. Join teams going door to door and to workers resistance. Contact a distributor near you listed on page 8, the *Militant* at (212) 244-4899 or themilitant@mac.com.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CANADA

Montreal
Protests Demand: Arrest the Cop Who Killed Michael Brown! Speaker: John Steele, Communist League. Fri., Aug. 29, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St.-Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland
Hear Communist League Candidates for Parliament. Felicity Coggan for Maungakiekie; Annalucia Vermunt for Manukau East. Sat., Aug. 30, 7 p.m. 188a Onehunga Mall. Tel.: (09) 636-3231.

Kurds hold ground

Continued from front page

pressed under the Ottoman Empire and denied a homeland with the carving up of the Middle East by London and Paris following World War I, the Kurdish struggle has been a thorn in the side of capitalist regimes in the region and a growing concern of the ruling classes of America and Western Europe.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) — an armed group that fought for Kurdish autonomy in Turkey for three decades — has joined the fight alongside Peshmerga forces. Together they expelled the Islamic State Aug. 10 from the town of Mahmour in Iraqi Kurdistan, where some 10,000 Kurds from Turkey live in refugee camps.

“We will keep fighting until all of Kurdistan is safe,” Sedar Botan, a female PKK commander who came with seven units from the group’s stronghold in Turkey’s Qandil mountains, told the *Financial Times*.

“This is the first time we have military cooperation with the Peshmerga, and we plan to increase it,” PKK commander Tekoshar Zagros told the *Times* in Mahmour. “We’re fighting defensively and don’t have a plan of attack yet, but it’s coming.”

Also fighting alongside Peshmerga were three Kurdish parties from Iran, reported the Kurdish news agency Rudaw. Hundreds of fighters were sent for at least a couple days by the Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iran, Kurdistan Freedom Party and Kurdistan Struggle Agency.

The Barack Obama administration has sought to cobble back together and strengthen the fractured central Iraqi government in Baghdad to lead the fight against the Islamic State and serve as a counterweight to the Kurds’ growing confidence and capacities.

The Pentagon is “speeding up efforts to send thousands of Hellfire air-to-surface missiles to Iraq,” said the *Wall Street Journal* Aug. 16. With Congressional approval Baghdad would receive about 5,000 of them.

The White House backed the nomination of Haider al-Abadi, a Shiite politician, to replace Shiite Nouri al-

Maliki as prime minister in hopes this will ease the sectarian conflicts between Shiites and Sunnis — rooted in decades of Sunni domination under an imperialist-backed monarchy followed by the Baathist Party rule of Sadaam Hussein and perpetuated by Shiite domination under Maliki’s eight-year rule. The latter, a consequence of Washington’s 2003-2011 war and occupation of Iraq, has created favorable conditions for the advance of the ultra-reactionary Sunni-based Islamic State.

The Iranian government, whose influence has grown under a Shiite-dominated Iraq, was quick to express its support for the new Iraqi regime, reflecting its common ground with Washington on the fight against the Islamic State and on the Kurdish question.

While the governments of several European countries, including France, Britain, Germany and Italy, have announced “humanitarian” aid for the growing numbers of displaced Iraqis, they like Washington won’t provide the kind of military aid the Kurdish Regional Government has requested.

Visiting Baghdad Aug. 16, Germany’s Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said his government would provide \$32 million in “humanitarian” aid to Iraq. The following day in an interview with Germany’s *Bild am Sonntag* newspaper, Steinmeier spoke against the formation of any independent Kurdish state, saying it would “destabilize” the region.

At an emergency meeting of European Union foreign ministers Aug. 15 to discuss Kurdish fighters’ request for military assistance, a motion was passed saying governments that provide such aid should first get approval from Baghdad.

Washington has sought to stymie the development of independent trade by the Kurdish Regional Government. At



Reuters/Youssef Boudlal

Kurdish Peshmerga fighters near Mahmour, Iraqi Kurdistan, Aug. 18. Peshmerga and guerrillas from Kurdistan Workers Party based among Kurds from Turkey retook Mahmour from Islamic State forces Aug. 10.

the end of July a Kurdish oil shipment of 1 million barrels was prevented from docking off the port of Galveston, Texas. Baghdad had asked a Texas court to stop it. A U.S. judge stopped short of Baghdad’s request that Washington seize the ship given its distance from shore. Other tankers carrying Kurdish oil have been halted off the shores of Morocco and Malaysia.

The Turkish government has responded to the advance of the Kurdish struggle in recent years with the 2013 cease-fire agreement with the PKK and a gradual easing of repressive anti-Kurdish laws and policies dubbed the “Kurdish initiative” by the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Turkey has become the main trading partner of Iraqi Kurdistan and allows shipment of Kurdish oil through the Turkish port of Ceyhan, creating tensions between Baghdad and Ankara.

Syrian Kurds battle Islamic State

In Syria, Kurds have been involved in fierce battles since July to drive back attacks by Islamic State combatants.

Deploying 10 tanks, other armored vehicles and thousands of mortars, Islamic State forces attacked fighters of the Committee for the Protection of the Kurdish People, the military wing of the Democratic Union Party. The Kurds temporarily retreated from several villages in a battle to defend the strategically located city of Kobane, with a population of some 400,000 near Turkey’s border, reported Rudaw Aug. 7.

Hundreds of Kurdish fighters from Turkey crossed over the border into the Syrian Kurdish region, known to Kurds as Rojava (Western Kurdistan), to assist in driving back Islamic State forces. About 200 Islamist State soldiers were killed in the offensive, according to Kurdish officials.

The struggle in Syria began in March 2011 with mass popular protests demanding an end to President Bashar al-Assad’s rule. Opposition forces took control of Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, and other parts of the country. But Assad’s relentless war, backed by Moscow and Tehran, has not only taken a massive toll on rebel fighters and quelled the rebellion, but devastated much of the population, killing 180,000 and displacing millions.

The opposition has weakened and fractured. In November 2013 a coalition of seven Islamist groups with about 45,000 fighters split from the Free Syrian Army and formed the Islamic Front. Both the Islamic Front and what’s left of the Free Syrian Army are at war with pro-Assad forces, as well as with the

al-Qaeda backed al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State, which are also rivals of Assad but concentrate their fire on the opposition.

During the civil war, Kurds in northeastern Syria have made gains. They ended the Assad regime’s control of the area in 2012 and have since held off offensives by reactionary Islamist forces.

Syrian government troops have nearly encircled Aleppo in preparation for a siege of the city, in what could be a major blow to the rebels but also an opening for Islamic State forces to grab more territory.

Another key battle is for control of the town of Marea in Aleppo province, the Islamic Front’s main base of operations. Islamic State combatants took over about 10 villages near Marea Aug. 13 and 14, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. If the Islamic State seizes Marea, as well as the town of Aazaz, by Turkey’s border, it would cut supply lines to rebel groups throughout the area, reported al-Arabiya News.

In the midst of these battles, the Assad regime bombed a rebel convoy heading to fight Islamic State combatants north of Aleppo Aug. 17, the Observatory reported.

Meanwhile in Turkey jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan met with three members of parliament from the Peoples’ Democratic Party one week after the election Aug. 10 of Erdogan as president. In a written statement issued by the PKK, Ocalan said that Turkey is on the verge of “historic developments,” and that “the 30-year war is at a phase of ending via democratic talks,” according to Kurdpress.

Since 2012 Ankara has been negotiating with the PKK leader, who was captured in 1999 and given a life sentence on charges of treason. In March 2013 a cease-fire agreement between the PKK and the government was reached that includes provisions for a greater degree of national and cultural rights.

Exhibit of paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five

I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived

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in New International No. 7 — \$14

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— ON THE PICKET LINE —

China: Textile workers protest job cuts

More than 300 workers, all of them women, at the Yinhe Jiutian Textiles Factory in Xiangfan, Hubei, in central China rallied at municipal government offices Aug. 11 over elimination of their jobs, reported Radio Free Asia, a U.S. government-funded news agency. Management reportedly told them to “take a three-month holiday” and shortly afterwards demolished the factory.

Police armed with batons attacked the protesters. “They injured some of us, and they are still in the hospital, protester Shi Junfang told RFA Aug. 12. “We were standing there, not even saying anything. Then they came over and dragged a few of us away.”

After closing the plant the company gave each worker 10 yuan (\$1.60) a day for three months, but no severance pay. “We want them to pay us according to the Labor Law [of the People’s Republic of China], because 300 yuan a month isn’t enough to live on; you can’t feed a family on that,” said Shi.

The Hong Kong-based China Labour Bulletin recorded 202 labor protests during the first quarter of 2014, mostly in the manufacturing sector, an increase of more than 30 percent compared to the same period last year.

— Brian Williams

Bangladesh garment workers occupy factory, win back pay

Demanding three months back pay and their holiday bonus, some 1,500 garment workers, the big majority women, occupied the Tuba company’s 12-story factory building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, July 28. They were forcibly driven out Aug. 7, but their fight continues.

The action started on the eve of Eid al-Fitr, the holiday marking the end of the Muslim monthlong Ramadan fast, and included workers from five different Tuba factories. Some 300 workers initiated a hunger strike.

Tuba group is owned by Delwar Hossain, who also owned the Tazreen Fashions factory where more than 110 workers were killed after being trapped behind locked exits and barred windows when a fire broke out in November 2012.

Hossain was arrested in February on charges of homicide and negligence leading to death. He was released on bail Aug. 5.

“Withholding workers’ wages was dirty politics from the owners to have Delwar bailed out. The government and the bosses took advantage of the situation saying he had to be bailed out so he could pay the wages,” Moshrefa Mishu, who participated in the hunger strike and is president the Garment Workers’ Unity Forum, told the *Militant* Aug. 18 by phone from Dhaka.

On the morning of Aug. 7 cops locked the door to the factory building, located in the North Badda area of Dhaka, stopping anybody from going in. A couple of hours later they blocked water and food from getting inside. Cops cut ropes that workers hung to collect water from relatives and supporters outside. At about 1 p.m. police stormed the factory, driving the workers out with tear gas and pepper spray.

“We were on protests due to our

hardships,” Bijli Begum, a worker, told the *Daily Star* Aug. 8. “What is our fault?”

Just before the police assault, hundreds of workers from nearby factories gathered outside the plant in solidarity. Traffic came to a halt amid clashes between workers and cops, who fired rubber bullets and used tear gas and water cannons to disperse protesters. Some 30 workers were injured during the clashes, which lasted for an hour and a half.

Workers were paid back wages by Aug. 10, after a meeting that included workers’ representatives, Tuba owners, representatives of the Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association and government officials. The meeting resolved that the Eid bonus would be “paid later.” The five facto-

South Africa: Metalworkers win wage raise

Continued from front page

plants along with auto factories that depend on those parts. They also won improvements for some temporary workers.

The strike ended July 29. Bosses agreed to a 10 percent annual wage increase for the lowest-paid workers for the next three years and 8 percent annually for the highest paid. Most members of the union are in the lower pay grades.

The union’s demands for a 1,000-



Associated Press/Zakir Hossain Chowdhury

Garment workers at Tuba plant in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Aug. 2 on strike for back wages.

ries are all closed down.

At an Aug. 13 press conference Mishu presented six demands, among them the payment of the Eid bonus,

cancellation of the bail of Hossain, an end to police harassment and resumption of production at all Tuba factories.

— Emma Johnson

rand (\$92) monthly housing allowance and an end to contracting many workers through labor brokers were not won. But according to the settlement, “employees engaged by a labour broker will be treated no differently from employees employed by an employer,” unless the bosses are granted an exemption.

“The most important thing was the salary,” Johannes Sibukwana, a warehouse worker in East Rand and member of the union negotiating committee, said by phone Aug. 19. “But the work-

ers are not 100 percent happy. They live in shacks, sometimes in garages used for cars. Like miners here, they live far from their families and need a housing allowance.”

If you are a permanent worker and “they retrench us, we get one week pay for each year of service,” Sibukwana said. “If a worker hired by a labor broker gets terminated, they get nothing.” The union will keep fighting to end the labor broker system, he said.

“There are still some challenges,” Mlamli Dumbisa, a worker in an auto parts plant in Port Elizabeth, said by phone. “Some employers have applied for exemptions from paying the wage increase. In some plants they have locked out workers.”

“Workers still have the right to strike over issues not in the main agreement,” said Nimrod Msila who works on the assembly line at a factory in East London that makes refrigerators. “We got strength from the strike.”

The Metalworkers strike followed on the heels of a five-month strike by miners at Anglo American Platinum, Impala and Lonmin, the world’s top three platinum producers. Led by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union, the workers won a 20 percent annual wage increase.



National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa

March by Metalworkers in South Africa July 1 during strike by 220,000 union members.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



September 1, 1989

Rubber bullets, whips, police dogs, guns, truncheons, tear gas. News reports out of South Africa list the weapons used by police against striking workers, schoolchildren, protestors and students, the majority of whom are Black, as the campaign of defiance against apartheid continues.

The regime has met the peaceful campaign with force and violence. The defiance efforts are aimed at Pretoria’s repressive and segregationist laws, which severely restrict political activity.

The first phase of the defiance efforts targeted whites-only hospitals around the country. The anti-apartheid alliance called on doctors and health workers to insist on treating all patients regardless of race. As a result, hundreds of Blacks were given medical care at these facilities.



September 7, 1964

NEW YORK — Clifton DeBerry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for President, scored the Johnson administration’s brazen intervention in the Congo as an attempt to turn that African nation into another Mississippi. Addressing an Aug. 29 street rally in Harlem Square (125th St. and Seventh Ave.) DeBerry demanded that Washington “immediately withdraw all its troops, arms, planes and money from the hated puppet regime of Moïse Tshombe.”

Police would not permit representatives of the Freedom Now Party, who joined in a statement condemning Washington’s Congo policy, to speak. Paul Boutelle, FNP candidate for state senator, protested this denial of his freedom of speech by mounting the speakers’ stand. Police immediately arrested him.



September 6, 1939

In Europe the war has begun. Like Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt says that he will try to keep America out but we know that he has been making every preparation to drag America in.

Republican Party, Democratic Party, Communist Party, all carefully avoid making direct references to the Negroes and the war.

The Socialist Workers Party has nothing to hide from the Negro. It says to him, as it says to the poor everywhere — whites, Negroes in Africa, Indians in India, “Brothers and sisters of whatever color, this war is not our war. We will not support it. We, the workers, the poor farmers in every country, white, black, and brown are not going to kill one another at the command of Chamberlain, or Hitler at the orders of Roosevelt or of the Japanese Mikado.

Fight Ferguson police killing

Continued from front page

nent coverage in major dailies and TV news outlets. Millions have viewed images of a militarized cop response with officers donning camouflage and employing military troop carriers defended by snipers.

The development has given impetus to fights around incidents of killings by police around the country. On Aug. 14, protest actions over Brown's killing took place in more than 90 cities across the U.S. and beyond. Thousands took to the streets in New York, about 1,000 in Washington, D.C.

That same day Gov. Jay Nixon ordered the Missouri Highway Patrol to relieve the Ferguson cops and put Ron Johnson, who is Black and from the area, in charge. Only three of the 53 Ferguson police are Black.

After withholding the name of the cop involved for six days, Ferguson Police Chief Tom Jackson identified Wilson on Aug. 15. At the same time authorities released a surveillance video purporting to show Brown shoplifting cigars at a convenience store the day he was killed.

A statement from Brown's family and their lawyers released that day called the video a "character assassination."

"They released the video to dehumanize us — to justify the murder," David Royal, 33, who lives near the site of the killing, told the *Militant* at the Aug. 16 march.

Delores Rich helped lead one of the more popular chants: "Hands up! Don't shoot!" referring to how Brown was standing when he was gunned down. "It's not about race, it's about humanity," said Rich, a Ferguson resident. "The blood of Michael Brown represents everyone out here," she said, adding that she also has an 18-year-old son.

Many came from the surrounding region and beyond.

"It got on television and then it got to a point where it felt like it was wrong not to be here and take a stand," said Anna Ready, who has worked in factories in the area and drove in with her husband from Granite City, Illinois, about 15 miles from here. "My grandson died in the back seat of a cop car in Bloomington, Illinois, two years ago and they

never found the cause of death." Ready is Caucasian; her grandson, Black.

The protest began at noon at the memorial to Michael Brown on 2900 Canfield Drive, where he was shot down, and marched two miles to Greater St. Mary's Church. The action was disciplined with organized security. Police presence was restrained. A short rally followed featuring Rev. Jesse Jackson.

The QT gas station, which was burned down the day after Brown's killing, has become a protest and gathering spot on West Florissant Avenue. Hundreds came together here after the march and held another street demonstration with participants directing traffic. Most passing cars honked or made other gestures of support.

Meanwhile, at a news conference inside the church Governor Nixon declared a nightly curfew to "restore peace" from midnight to 5 a.m., pointing to incidents of late-night looting and vandalism.

Demonstrations have continued into the night, as have attacks on police, looting and vandalism by a small group of provocateurs, opportunists and undisciplined youth — which have been met by police assaults, tear gas and rubber bullets.

On the first night of the curfew in a heavy downpour demonstrators were dispersed with tear gas and seven were arrested. One person was shot in a non-police-involved shooting, reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

On Sunday morning Aug. 17 an overflow crowd of some 2,000 people met at the Greater Grace Church to take part in a protest meeting.

"Michael Brown is going to change this town," said featured speaker Rev. Al Sharpton of the National Action Network. The police have become militarized, he said, they act like they are "at war with the citizens."

"We are not calling for the federal government to work with local authorities in this investigation, but to take it over," Sharpton said. He urged everyone to register to vote, saying, "Nobody can go to the White House unless they stop by our house."

"I am sorry. This is my neighborhood. I will protect your right to protest," said

New Zealand students write Cuban 5: 'Keep tough!'



Militant photos by Patrick Brown

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — "Stay strong. The world will change, and when it does you will win back your freedom," was the message from high school student Rahith Nagulan to three Cuban revolutionaries unjustly imprisoned in the United States. (See "Who Are the Cuban Five?" below.)

This and other expressions of support for the Cuban Five were written at an Aug. 15 Secondary Schools' Peace Symposium involving more than 60 students from 10 schools. Organized by the Peace Foundation, the meeting's theme was "Arts4Peace."

The teenagers responded after hearing a brief talk about the campaign to win freedom for the Cuban Five, which for most was their first introduction to the case. They were also able to look at a collection of prison paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Five, set up on tables in the foyer. Titled "I Will Die the Way I've Lived," the 15 watercolors and accompanying descriptions convey the experience of Guerrero and his four comrades during their first months in U.S. prisons.

"I need you guys to know that even though your goal was to save your people's lives and that didn't go to plan — your story has saved many people's lives one way or another. You guys have remained to stay true to yourself and I admire that," wrote Azeeza Sahib, inset, at left, ending her letter "KEEP TOUGH!!!"

Nine students wrote messages to the framed-up revolutionaries.

Following the symposium, one of the teachers took the paintings to display at her school as part of an "arts week."

— JANET ROTH

Who are the Cuban Five?



Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the Five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with "conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information."

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government's 1996 shootdown of two Brothers to the Rescue planes that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana's repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013 and Fernando González on Feb. 28 this year.

Highway Patrol Captain Johnson, wearing his cop uniform. "When this is over I'm going to go into my son's room, my Black son, who wears his pants sagging, wears his hat cocked to the side, got tattoos on his arms. But that's my baby."

The same day around 150 cops and their supporters rallied in defense of cop Darren Wilson in downtown St. Louis, the *Post-Dispatch* reported.

That night, starting around 9 p.m. three hours before the curfew, cops threw tear gas and smoke canisters to disperse hundreds of protesters on West Florissant Avenue. At least seven protesters were arrested on charges of violating the curfew. Two women gave statements to Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, saying cops pulled them out of their car by the hair.

The next morning, Aug. 18, Governor Nixon announced an end to the curfew. Instead, he said the National Guard will be called out with a "limited mission" — to protect the police command center in the Westfall shopping center on West Florissant.

"We are all frustrated and looking for justice to be achieved regarding the shooting death of Michael Brown," Nixon said, adding that they will still act to protect Ferguson from looting and other disturbances by "violent interlopers."

That evening cops fired tear gas at protesters after a small group within a large crowd of demonstrators hurled bottles, rocks and Molotov cocktails at the police. "Some demonstrators, including a church minister using a blow horn, urged crowds to calm down," Reuters

reported. Cops said they came under gunfire later that night. Two people were shot in the crowd; police say they fired no shots. Seventy-eight people were arrested. "At one point, demonstrators formed a human chain to prevent more aggressive protesters from reaching the police line," reported the *Journal*.

Some 20,000 people have signed a petition calling for appointment of a special prosecutor to indict the cop who shot Brown.

St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney Robert McCulloch has been caught lying to protect cops from prosecution. In 2000, for example, he told the public that a secret grand jury had found that "every witness" to the killing of two men in a car had testified that the men tried to run the cops down. But the *Post-Dispatch* later found that only three of the 13 detectives who testified made that claim — two of whom faced indictment — and four disputed their statements.

In New York, the National Action Network, the NAACP, Service Employees International Union Local 1199 and the United Federation of Teachers have called a march Aug. 23 in Staten Island to protest the cop chokehold killing of Eric Garner July 17. Michael Brown's parents, Lesley McSpadden and Michael Brown Sr., plan to participate.

Protesters here plan to keep demonstrating.

"We got to start to win the little battles and not get discouraged on the road to something real," Lance Morrell, an unemployed worker in his mid-20s who lives in Brown's neighborhood, told the *Militant*.

SWP leader speaks to workers from bosses' court

New edition of 'Socialism on Trial' presents program to advance fight for workers power

Socialism on Trial by James P. Cannon. 292 pages. Pathfinder Press, 2014. \$16.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The revolutionary workers' movement fought back when 18 leaders of the Teamsters' battles in the Midwest and the Socialist Workers Party were framed up and railroaded to prison in 1941. They were the first targets of the thought-control Smith Act, which made it illegal to "teach, advocate and encourage" revolutionary ideas. Unfolding with the approach of Washington's entry into World War II, the trial was a moment when the working-class vanguard effectively defended itself in the rulers' courts and used the platform to speak to the working-class public.

Trial testimony by James P. Cannon, a defendant and national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, exposed the hypocrisy of capitalist "justice" and explained the aims of the communist movement. At the same time, it uncovered the veiled aims of the propertied rulers to keep labor, Blacks and other

IN REVIEW

oppressed people "in their place" and drag workers and farmers into the second world imperialist slaughter.

Cannon's statements over three days of examination and cross-examination, first published as *Socialism on Trial* in 1942, provide concise answers on fundamental questions about socialism that retain every bit as much their ability to educate and inspire working-class militants today.

Pathfinder Press recently released a new edition of *Socialism on Trial* in English and Spanish. The new, expanded edition restores the 1944 introduction by Joseph Hansen, a central leader of the Socialist Workers Party who served as editor of the *Militant* and other publications until his death in 1979. The introduction gives context to the frame-up and broad political defense organized by the SWP, the labor movement and other supporters of civil liberties.

The updated book also includes a new preface by Steve Clark, today a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee and managing



Minnesota Historical Society

Teamster-organized truckers and warehousemen during strike in Minneapolis, May 1934. "Hundreds of cops and special deputies were organized to drive workers off the street," James P. Cannon testified in 1941 frame-up trial. "They got a dose of their own medicine. I think the workers have a right to defend themselves. If that is treason, make the most of it."

editor of *New International*, a Marxist magazine of politics and theory. Also added are numerous photos and illustrations along with a glossary of names and events. For the first time, the Spanish edition includes a translation of the final section, which includes a sweeping criticism of Cannon's defense testimony by revolutionary socialist Grandizo Munis and Cannon's response.

"Although the Minneapolis case was the first peacetime federal prosecution for sedition in the history of the United States," wrote Joseph Hansen in the book's introduction, "it was clearly engineered by the Roosevelt administration as part of its war program."

The administration, "expecting momentarily to plunge the United States into the catastrophe of World War II, wished to isolate and silence the advocates of socialism so that their ideas might be prevented from gaining a hearing among the masses driven into the slaughter," Hansen wrote.

An indictment drawn up by the Department of Justice and handed down by a federal grand jury charged 29 men and women of "conspiracy to overthrow the government by force and violence," based on an 1861 statute passed during the Civil War against the Southern slaveholders. Through the course of the

trial all were subsequently acquitted of this charge.

But 18 were convicted of charges brought under the Smith Act, which included advocating overthrow of the government by force; publishing and circulating literature advocating this; and forming organizations "to teach, advocate and encourage" such overthrow.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee was formed to reach out to unionists, Black rights organizations and others to fight against the frame-up. It won support from more than 135 unions. After the Supreme Court denied the request to hear their appeal, the defendants began serving sentences of one year to 16 months behind bars.

"What is the purpose of the Socialist Workers Party," defense attorney Albert Goldman, who himself was one of the defendants, asked Cannon. "We have set as our aim the establishment of a workers and farmers government, in place of the existing government which we term a capitalist government," Cannon replied. "The task of this government would be to arrange and control the transition of society from the basis of capitalism to the basis of socialism."

Among the wide-ranging questions asked of Cannon was "how socialist society would be controlled and directed."

"After the social revolution has been effected in the political arena and the capitalist government has been replaced by a workers and farmers government," replied Cannon, "the importance and weight of the government as a repressive force would gradually diminish."

"The government of a socialist society in reality will be an administrative body, because we don't anticipate the need for armies and navies, jails, repressions, and consequently that aspect of government dies out for want of function," said Cannon.

"Violence is initiated



Hennepin County Library Special Collection

James P. Cannon, right, and Farrell Dobbs, Socialist Workers Party leaders and two of 18 defendants in Minneapolis, 1941.

always by the ruling class; always the outlived class that doesn't want to leave the state when the time has come," Cannon said in response to a question on the role of violence in the revolutionary struggle. "They want to hang on to their privileges, to reinforce them by violent measures, against the rising majority and they run up against the mass violence of the new class, which history has ordained shall come to power."

"Even if the transfer of power is accomplished peacefully, the minority capitalist class will revolt," said Cannon. "The U.S. Civil War resulted from slaveholders' refusal to accept the election of President Lincoln. ... In Spain, when workers parties and liberal parties won a majority and formed the People's Front government, they faced an armed rebellion by reactionary capitalists."

'Contradictions in capitalist system'

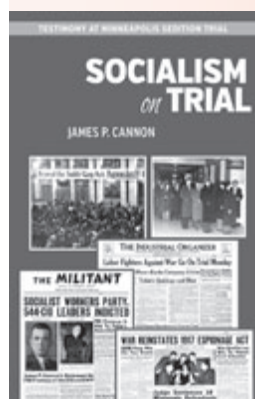
The factors driving for socialism "are the contradictions within the capitalist system itself," Cannon explained. Since the SWP is a minority in the working class, its job is to patiently explain its program and perspectives through use of its newspaper and revolutionary literature in

Continued on page 9



"Violence is initiated always by the ruling class," said Cannon. "In Spain, when workers parties and liberal parties won a majority and formed the People's Front government, they faced an armed rebellion by reactionary capitalists." Above, workers form militia, 1936, to defend Spanish republic against fascist forces led by Gen. Francisco Franco.

Socialism on Trial Testimony at Minneapolis Sedition Trial by James P. Cannon



The revolutionary program of the working class, as presented during the 1941 trial of leaders of the Minneapolis labor movement and Socialist Workers Party who were framed up on charges of "seditious conspiracy" on the eve of U.S. entry into World War II.

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Greatest blow to discrimination ‘was the revolution itself’

Below is an excerpt from Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution. The book contains interviews with generals Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sío Wong whose individual stories illuminate the social and political forces that made possible the victory of the Cuban Revolution. The selection printed here is from the book’s introduction by Mary-Alice Waters, who also conducted and edited the interviews. Copyright © 2005 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Our History Is Still Being Written adds one more chapter to the chronicle of the Cuban Revolution as told by those who were — and more than fifty years later remain — on the front lines of that epic battle.

Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong, three young rebels of Chinese-Cuban ancestry, became combatants in the clandestine struggle and 1956–58 revolutionary war that brought down the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the door to the socialist revolution in the Americas. Each, in the course of a lifetime of revolutionary action, became a general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of



Rally in Havana Sept. 2, 1960. Banner in Spanish and Chinese reads: “Resident Chinese support Cuban Revolution and its leader Fidel Castro!” New revolutionary government in Cuba took measures to combat centuries-old legacy of racist discrimination against Blacks and Chinese.

Cuba. Through their stories the economic, social, and political forces that gave birth to the Cuban nation and still shape our epoch unfold.

We see how millions of ordinary human beings like them — the “men and women from nowhere” who the rulers cannot even see — simply refused to accept a future without dignity or hope, refused to settle for less than they dreamed of. They marched onto the stage of history and changed its course, becoming different human beings themselves in the process. ...

The three young Chinese-Cubans, of similar age, grew up in different parts of Cuba, under different class and social conditions. With each following his own path, all three came to the same revolutionary course of action. They threw themselves into the great proletarian battle that defined their generation — the struggle to overthrow the Batista tyranny and defend Cuba’s sovereignty and independence against the onslaught of the imperialist empire to the north.

The significance and historical weight of Chinese immigration to Cuba starting in the mid-nineteenth century emerges from their accounts. In proportion to

population, this immigration to Cuba was greater than anywhere else in the Americas, the United States included. In fact, thousands of Chinese laborers brought to build railroads in the U.S. West later emigrated to Cuba in hopes of finding better conditions of life and work.

The lucrative trafficking in tens upon tens of thousands of Chinese peasants — their impressment, their death-ship transport to Cuba, their indentured labor on sugar plantations supplementing the dwindling supply of African slaves, and above all their resistance, struggles, and unblemished record of combat in Cuba’s 1868–98 independence wars against Spain — all that is sketched here in broad outlines. It is a story largely unknown outside Cuba.

What is presented, however, is not history alone. This is one of the indispensable strands of revolutionary Cuba today — from the pre-1959 racist oppression of Chinese as well as Blacks, to the measures taken by the popular revolutionary government headed by Fidel Castro to end this discrimination and combat its legacy, to the integration of Cubans of Chinese origin into every level of social and political life

today. As Sío Wong puts it so forcefully, the greatest measure taken against discrimination “was the revolution itself.”

“The Chinese community here in Cuba is different from Peru, Brazil, Argentina, or Canada,” he emphasizes. “And that difference is the triumph of a socialist revolution.”

The revolutionary overthrow of the Batista dictatorship was not the end of a story. It was the beginning. The working people of Cuba began building a new society that posed an intolerable “affront” to the prerogatives of capital. For nearly half a century they have held at bay the strongest imperialist power that will ever stalk the globe. In doing so the Cuban toilers and their government have become a beacon, and an ally, to those the world over seeking to learn how to fight to transform their lives — and how to fight to *win*.

Among the many responsibilities Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong have each shouldered over the years within the Revolutionary Armed Forces as well as in government assignments and in the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba, participation in Cuba’s internationalist missions abroad stands out.

“Because our system is socialist in character and commitment,” Choy explains, revolutionaries in Cuba have always sought to act “in the interests of the majority of humanity inhabiting planet earth — not on behalf of narrow individual interests, or even simply Cuba’s national interests.”

Each served in Angola at various times between 1975 and 1988, as Cuba responded to the request of the Angolan government, just gaining its independence from Portugal, for aid to defeat an imperialist-backed invasion by the armed forces of South Africa’s apartheid regime. ...

Our History Is Still Being Written — the title comes from Chui — captures the revolutionary perspective and ongoing intensity of work of the book’s three protagonists. In the final section, “The Special Period and Beyond,” each of them is looking to the future. ...

As each of the three generals makes clear, the future will be decided not *for* the working people of Cuba, but *by* them.

September BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Arrest cops who killed Brown, Garner!

Continued from front page
and harassment. Take part in other protests against cop abuse in your area.

“Hands up, don’t shoot!” is a slogan taken up by working people and youth that has captured their righteous indignation against the killing of unarmed Brown, who was shot six times despite putting his hands in the air. In the days after Brown was gunned down, millions saw images of Ferguson where the determination of working people captured the moral high ground with discipline and dignity in face of a militarized cop response. They drew attention to resentment over decades of racist and anti-working-class cop attacks and other indignities.

They put the U.S. rulers, their cops and politicians on the defensive. They forced them to adjust their tactics several times and pay lip service to the legitimacy of the outrage and protests as they sought themselves to take the moral high ground in public opinion. In this battle, the rulers have had little else to wield except the destructive nightly actions of small groups of provocateurs, looters and vandals.

The current wave of demonstrations stand as a statement against the multi-faceted assault on the working class by the capitalist system of “justice” meted out by the rulers’ cops, judges and prison guards.

Arrests and incarcerations around the country have soared in recent decades. The FBI says its master database of “criminals” now contains the names of one out of every three adults. The list is easily accessed by bosses, banks and landlords. More than 10,000 names are added every week.

Especially since 2001, the federal government has armed local police departments with military-style equipment, from assault rifles to armored troop carriers. The Missouri Department of Public Services has received \$69 million from the Department of Homeland Security to buy advanced military hardware and other high-tech equipment.

Under “broken windows” and “stop-and-frisk” rubrics, cops target young working-class men — in vastly disproportionate numbers Black, Latino and Native American — for petty crimes, swelling the ranks of the incarcerated. So far this year more than 3,000 have been sent to jail for jumping over subway fare turnstiles in New York. When charged, working people face a frame-up system in which 95 percent are effectively denied their basic right to a trial, forced to “accept” a plea bargain rather than face a court they know is stacked against them.

Inhumane and often torturous conditions face those thrown into the rulers’ jails and prisons, including widespread use of solitary confinement. At least 44 percent of youth sentenced to New York’s notorious Rikers Island have faced guard brutality, leading to a “staggering” number of injuries, according to a recent special U.S. Attorney’s report.

From Ferguson to Staten Island, Rikers Island to Pelican Bay, the cops, courts and prisons are the rulers’ answer to the grinding effects of the crisis of their capitalist system on working people, whom they ultimately fear and whose struggles today can open the door to the fight for a world free of capitalist exploitation and brutality.

Join us Aug. 23!

New edition of ‘Socialism on Trial’

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preparation for inevitable mass actions down the road.

“We, as Marxists, believe that historical development will come powerfully to the aid of our ideas,” said Cannon. “Continued bankruptcy of the present system, its inability to solve its problems, its worsening of the conditions of the people, will push them on the road in search of a solution of what seems to them an absolutely hopeless situation.

“Under those conditions our program can appear to the people more and more plausible, more and more reasonable, and we can begin to become a stronger party. It has happened before with parties of similar ideas.”

In response to a question on how the party tries to win influence in the unions, Cannon said party members “must be the best trade unionists in the union, and they must be the best workers on the job” to “gain the respect of their fellow workers and their confidence.” At the same time “they have got to be busy and active in all union affairs” and “work to gain sympathy and support for the party and its program.”

Cannon did not shirk from explaining the SWP’s active opposition to U.S. entry into World War II, for which the 18 were railroaded to prison. “In our paper we write against U.S. entry into the war. We speak against it. We carry out public political agitation against all measures taken by the Executive or by Congress that lead towards participation in the war. ... We do not want to gain any colonies. We do not want bloodshed to make profits for American capital.”

“It’s absolutely true that Hitler wants to dominate the world, but it’s equally true that the ruling group of American capitalists has the same idea,” Cannon said. “We’re not in favor of either American or German imperialism dominating the world.”

Answer to ultraleft critics

The section titled “Communist Policy in the Minneapolis Trial: James P. Cannon Answers His Ultraleft Critics” includes a criticism by Grandizo Munis, an exile in Mexico who had fought against dictator Francisco Franco in the civil war in his native Spain. Munis said that Cannon’s testimony “bordered on a renunciation of principles,” offered

“comfortable propaganda” instead of revolutionary action, downplayed revolutionary violence in the transition to socialism, and was aimed at securing lighter sentences for the defendants.

“I do not find in the long pages of the interrogation of Cannon anything other than propaganda, propaganda, and more propaganda,” said Munis. “Why not call upon the workers to organize their own violence against the reactionary violence?”

“Our main task,” replied Cannon, “was to use the courtroom to speak to American workers who might hear us for the first time. This required, in our judgment, not a call to action but patient explanations.”

“Marxism, without a doubt, is the doctrine of revolutionary action,” Cannon wrote. “But it has nothing in common with ‘violence of individuals,’ ‘partial risings of small groups,’ or any other form of ‘action’ wherein individuals or minorities attempt to substitute themselves for the masses. The revolutionary action which Marxism contemplates is the action of the masses, of the proletarian majority, led by the vanguard party. But this action, and the party’s leading role in it must be, and can only be, *prepared by propaganda*. ... A party which lacks a mass base, which has yet to become widely known to the workers, must approach them along the lines of propaganda, of patient explanations.

“The bourgeoisie have always tried to picture communism as a ‘criminal conspiracy’ in order to alienate the workers who are profoundly democratic in their sentiments,” Cannon said. “That was the aim once again in the Minneapolis trial. It was our task at the trial to go out of our way to refute this misrepresentation and emphasize the democratic basis of our program; not in order to placate our enemies and persecutors, as is assumed, but in order to reveal the truth to our friends, the American workers.”

With supporting examples from the strategy of the Bolshevik Party that brought workers and farmers to power in the Russian Revolution of 1917, Cannon stands by the defensive formulations used to defend the worker militants on trial as “the best methods for the mobilization of the workers for mass action throughout all states of the development of the proletarian revolution in the United States.”

‘We dedicate our lives to the workers cause’

Below is an excerpt from the speech given by Farrell Dobbs at a Dec. 26, 1943, farewell banquet held in New York City before he and 17 other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Teamsters union began serving their sentences after being framed up and convicted under the thought-control Smith Act.

I have never been in jail. But some of my best friends have been in jail. And therefore I have had a great deal of kindly advice and feel amply prepared to meet all of the exigencies of the period ahead.

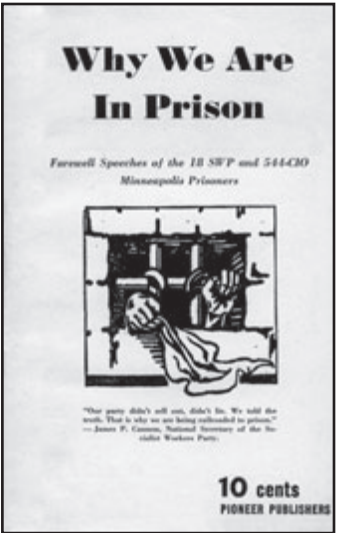
One of our comrades who was imprisoned at the time of the trial in Minneapolis in 1941 — in the penitentiary where some of us are now going — told us a very interesting story about the reactions of the men in the penitentiary during the trial of the 28 in Minneapolis. He said that these men in the prison followed closely the reports of the trial in the Minneapolis press, and they were absolutely convinced that it was only a matter of hours or days at most as the trial proceeded, until at least one of the many defendants would testify on behalf of the government and, in prison parlance put the finger on the others.

He related how they watched with absolute disbelief, as the trial unfolded, day after day, and they read the accounts in the paper. They saw the prosecution present its case. They saw the prosecution witnesses, the Tobin stool-pigeons, the FBI college boys, and the rest of their stooges, take the stand one after another to testify against the defendants, and, finally, in amazement, they saw the prosecution rest its case without putting a single one of the defendants on the stand to testify against the others.

They saw the defendants go forward with the defense testimony, standing solid. Everyone who testified, held to his convictions, refused to waver or weaken in the face of the prosecution. And when the judge passed sentence, the 18, who finally were convicted, stood absolutely firm, looked the judge in the eye when he passed sentence and walked out of the courtroom with heads erect. And these men in the penitentiary couldn’t believe this.

They asked our comrades in the penitentiary, “What kind of people are these comrades of yours?” They knew the time tried method of the prosecution — to lump together a mass of defendants, figuring with absolute certainty that, under the law of averages, there would be at least one weakling in the group who will break down and give aid and support to the government in its case against the others. “What kind of people are these?” They couldn’t understand. And they are not the only ones who couldn’t understand.

But these comrades who stood before the court are typical of the kind of people that make up the membership of the Socialist Workers Party. We are a party of one-hundred percenters. We have made up our minds that the great cause to which we have dedicated our lives is more important than anything else in this world. We place it before every other consideration. Nothing else is dearer to us. And we laugh with disdain at the capitalist tyrants who try by their persecutions, by their legal frame-ups and their prisons to swerve us from our path, try to frighten us away from the fight for the great goal for which we struggle. We understand — everyone of us — that nothing is more important than the working class cause to which we dedicate our lives.



Pamphlet with speeches by SWP leaders on way to prison helped win support against frame-up.